

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) is one of several ways to improve and master writing skill. This inevitable tool is important for teachers to correct the erroneous on EFL learners' written work. Despite the fact that the debate still rants as to whether WCF helps learners enhance the accuracy of their writing, most of the prior studies have proven that learners who received corrective feedback enhance their accuracy over time (Hosseiny, 2014).

A number of studies have been investigated to compare the efficacy of different types of WCF. However, one of the largest amount discussed is between direct CF and indirect CF (e.g. Eslami, 2014; Jamalinesari, Rahimi, Gowhary, & Azizifar, 2015; Osanloo & Kolahi, 2017; Sadat, Zarifi, Sadat, & Malekzadeh, 2015; van Beuningen, de Jong, & Kuiken, 2008). In direct CF, teachers indicate the error and provide the correct form directly (Ellis, 2009; Hosseiny, 2014). It can be in different ways, by crossing out an unnecessary word, phrase, or morpheme; inserting a missing word or morpheme, and provide the correct form directly near the error form (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Ellis, 2009). Whereas indirect CF only indicates the error without providing the correct one, and thus let students do self-correction (Ellis, 2009; Eslami, 2014; Li & He, 2017). This particular feedback is able to be provided either by only underlining and circling the error or indicate the error by placing a sign in the margin of line (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010).

Comparing these two types of written correction (namely direct and indirect CF) is a great importance to find out whether there is any effect on EFL learners' writing accuracy. In fact, abundant studies have been investigated the difference among them. Nevertheless, the results are still mixed and contradictory (Eslami, 2014). For instance, some studies (Aghajanloo, 2016; Osanloo & Kolahi, 2017; C. G. van Beuningen et al., 2008) reveal that utilization of direct CF is more efficient than indirect CF technique, yet the result of other studies (Eslami, 2014; Jamalinesari et al., 2015) show the indirect CF proved to be significantly better. Moreover, although contrasting with his opinion about WCF with its significance in enhancing accuracy, the result of his recent study (Hosseiny, 2014) found that the difference between these particular feedback is not meaningful.

A further controversy reports to strengthen the result of studies between these two types of feedback is also asserted by the advocates. Some of the advocates of direct feedback (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Osanloo & Kolahi, 2017) argue that this particular feedback brings more advantages since it offers the learners with adequate data to correct the complicated errors. This is the best way for learners' uptake on syntactic and idiosyncratic errors which are estimated as complex error. Moreover, Chandler (2003) claims that the direct one enables learners to assume the revision form accurately as given by teachers. Although here the learners only have a very little intervention to do self-correcting, however, at least they are able to hypothesize the revision by the teacher precisely. The result also reveals that direct CF provides learners the fastest way to do the correction.

In contrast, a number of researchers (e.g Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Lalande, 1982) suggest that indirect CF is outperformed since it encourages learners to do self-correction and promotes long - term learners' writing development (Ellis, 2009). They claim that indirect CF is appropriate for learners as a problem – solving and a learning assistance. To date, by naming them as the experts also agree that indirect CF engages learners to participate in correction activity. Thus, learners' intervention is associated with positive impact on long – term learning.

With these contradictory and long controversial results, the recent study sought to further examine the efficacy of direct CF and indirect one on the improvement of EFL learners' writing accuracy. The contribution to the empirical body of knowledge on the effectiveness of WCF is the main focus of this research. Additionally, this study also attempts to assisting teachers to find out which technique of WCF can result in the better gain in EFL learner's writing accuracy.

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the issue, the research question is as follow:

Which one of these two types of WCF (between direct and indirect) is more effective on the improvement of EFL learners' writing accuracy?

1.3 Hypothesis of Study

Based on the research problem, the hypothesis of this study is formulated as follows:

H₀: There is no significant difference between the effectiveness of direct and indirect CF in terms of EFL learners' writing accuracy.

H₁: Either one of these two types of WCF (namely direct and indirect) is better than the other.

1.4 Research Objective

Based on the research problem, the objective of the research is as follow:

To compare the effectiveness of two types of WCF on the improvement of EFL learners' writing accuracy.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on two types of WCF, direct and indirect CF. The effectiveness of these two types is the main aspect of this investigation. Considering the contradictory and inconsistency findings of previous studies, it is clear that research about this issue is still needed. In order to cover up the lack of some previous studies, this study attempts to carry it with well design. As the alternative to conduct the well investigation, this study utilizes learners' new pieces of writing to be examined.

Like any other studies, this study also has unavoidable limitations. First, this research only focuses on the effectiveness of two types of written corrective feedback (i.e. direct and indirect CF). Whereas there were many variables to be concerned such as learners' preferences and motivation toward corrective feedback. Second, this study employs a focused correction in which only one or fewer writing aspects to be corrected. The use of two types of English article system are chosen as target linguistic: indefinite (a/an) and definite (the).

1.6 Research Significance

1. English teachers

This study attempts to inform English teachers about which one of WCF possibly is more helpful for EFL learners' to gain better result on writing accuracy. This contribution is significant since previous studies reveal inconsistent findings and thus build confusion of teachers to use direct or indirect CF. The result of this study could be the reference for English teachers to select an appropriate type of WCF. As noted above, the appropriate technique of WCF supports the teachers to help learners trouble-shoot their writing performance. For instance, the use of specific type may help learners either understand their error precisely or promote long-term writing acquisition.

2. Research in the field

This present study also contributes to the further research and the body of knowledge related to the efficacy of two types of written feedback. Reflecting on the unclear result about this issue, this study attempts to fill the gap in the literature. Contributing to the controversy of this research field, this investigation examines which one of these two types of WCF (namely direct and indirect CF) is more helpful for Indonesian learners to get the improvement in their writing accuracy. The result of this study could be the reference for the further research, particularly in Indonesian context. Moreover, this study also has a potential to introduce and disseminate Indonesian context especially in WCF research.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

- 1) WCF is a written error correction used by teachers to correct the erroneous on learners' written work.
- 2) Direct CF : In direct CF, teachers indicate the error and provide the correct form directly (Ellis, 2009; Hosseiny, 2014)
- 3) Indirect CF : indirect CF only indicating the error without provide the correct one, and thus let students to do self-correction (Ellis, 2009; Eslami, 2014; Li & He, 2017).
- 4) Writing accuracy is the enhancement of the writers' aptitude to produce written work without making any errors which including the writing aspects (e.g. grammar, spelling, punctuation, and so on) (Seiffedin, 2017)